

December 20, 2010

Reply to the Office Action dated September 21, 2010

Page 6 of 8

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 23, 25-39, and 44-46 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant AMENDS claim 23 and ADDS claims 45 and 46.

Support for new claims 45 and 46 is found, for example, in Fig. 7(b) of Applicant's drawings.

On page 2 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 23, 25, 26, 33, 34, 38, 39, and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gider et al. (U.S. 2004/0027719). On page 5 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gider et al. in view of Hirooka (U.S. 2003/0036025). On page 6 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 30 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gider et al. in view of Hirooka (U.S. 2003/0036025) and further in view of Hirooka (JP 2004-127442). On page 7 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 32 and 35-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gider et al.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 23, 25-39, and 44.

Applicant's claim 23 recites:

A thin-film magnetic head substrate comprising:
a ceramic base with a principal surface; and
an undercoat film, which is made of an aluminum oxide and which covers
the principal surface of the ceramic base, an electrical/magnetic transducer
being provided on the undercoat film; wherein
the substrate further includes an intermediate layer between the
principal surface of the ceramic base and the undercoat film;
the intermediate layer is made of a material other than the aluminum
oxide, has been patterned so as to make a portion of the principal surface of the
ceramic base contact with the undercoat film, and has an opening where the
electrical/magnetic transducer is not located;
the ceramic base is a single monolithic layer arranged to be the bottom-
most layer of the thin-film magnetic head substrate; and
in a region other than the opening of the intermediate layer, as viewed
in a direction perpendicular to the principal surface of the ceramic base:
the intermediate layer is present between the undercoat film
and the ceramic base; and

the undercoat film is not in contact with the ceramic base.
(emphasis added)

In Section No. 3 on pages 2 and 3 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner alleged that **Fig. 3** of Gider et al. teaches each of the features recited in Applicant's claim 23. The Examiner alleged that the slider body **308** of Gider et al. teaches the ceramic base recited in Applicant's claim 23, that the insulation layer **310** of Gider et al. teaches the undercoat film recited in Applicant's claim 23, and that the heat sink **304** of Gider et al. teaches the intermediate layer recited in Applicant's claim 23. The Examiner alleged that the heat sink **304** of Gider et al. includes an opening at the left hand portion of **Fig. 3** of Gider et al.

Applicant has amended claim 23 to recite the features of "in a region other than the opening of the intermediate layer, as viewed in a direction perpendicular to the principal surface of the ceramic base[] the intermediate layer is present between the undercoat film and the ceramic base" and "the undercoat film is not in contact with the ceramic base." Support for this feature is found, for example, in **Fig. 7(b)** of Applicant's Drawings.

However, as seen in the center and right portions of **Fig. 3** of Gider et al. (in the region other than the opening of the heat sink **304**), (1) the heat sink **304** is not present between the slider body **308** and the insulation layer **310** and (2) the insulation layer **310** is in contact the slider body **308**. Thus, Gider et al. fails to teach or suggest the features of "in a region other than the opening of the intermediate layer, as viewed in a direction perpendicular to the principal surface of the ceramic base[] the intermediate layer is present between the undercoat film and the ceramic base" and "the undercoat film is not in contact with the ceramic base" as recited in Applicant's claim 23.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gider et al.

The Examiner has relied upon Hirooka (U.S. 2003/0036025) and Hirooka (JP 2004-127442) to allegedly cure various deficiencies in Gider et al. However, Hirooka (U.S. 2003/0036025) and Hirooka (JP 2004-127442), applied alone or in combination with Gider et al., fail to teach or suggest the features of "in a region other than the opening of the

December 20, 2010

Reply to the Office Action dated September 21, 2010

Page 8 of 8

intermediate layer, as viewed in a direction perpendicular to the principal surface of the ceramic base[] the intermediate layer is present between the undercoat film and the ceramic base" and "the undercoat film is not in contact with the ceramic base" in combination with the other features recited in Applicant's claim 23.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record, applied alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of elements recited in claim 23 of the present application. Claims 25-39 and 44-46 depend upon claim 23 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claim 23 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: December 20, 2010

/Peter Medley #56,125/
Attorneys for Applicant

KEATING & BENNETT, LLP
1800 Alexander Bell Drive, Suite 200
Reston, VA 20191
Telephone: (571) 313-7440
Facsimile: (571) 313-7421

Joseph R. Keating
Registration No. 37,368

Peter Medley
Registration No. 56,125